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other publicity regarding the availability of such materials may be sufficient.

(b) *Public notices.* The Attorney General will consider whether public notices and announcements of electoral activities are handled in a manner that provides members of the applicable language minority group an effective opportunity to be informed about electoral activities.

(c) *Registration.* The Attorney General will consider whether the registration system is conducted in such a way that members of the applicable language minority group have an effective opportunity to register. One method of accomplishing this is to provide, in the applicable minority language, all notices, forms and other materials provided to potential registrants and to have only bilingual persons as registrars. Effective results may also be obtained, for example, through the use of deputy registrars who are members of the applicable language minority group and the use of decentralized places of registration, with minority language materials available at places where persons who need them are most likely to come to register.

(d) *Polling place activities.* The Attorney General will consider whether polling place activities are conducted in such a way that members of the applicable language minority group have an effective opportunity to vote. One method of accomplishing this is to provide all notices, instructions, ballots, and other pertinent materials and oral assistance in the applicable minority language. If very few of the registered voters scheduled to vote at a particular polling place need minority language materials or assistance, the Attorney General will consider whether an alternative system enabling those few to cast effective ballots is available.

(e) *Publicity.* The Attorney General will consider whether a covered jurisdiction has taken appropriate steps to publicize the availability of materials and assistance in the minority language. Such steps may include the display of appropriate notices, in the minority language, at voter registration offices, polling places, etc., the making of announcements over minority language radio or television stations, the

publication of notices in minority language newspapers, and direct contact with language minority group organizations.

[Order No. 655–76, 41 FR 29998, July 20, 1976, as amended by Order No. 733–77, 42 FR 35970, July 13, 1977]

§ 55.19 Written materials.

(a) *Types of materials.* It is the obligation of the jurisdiction to decide what materials must be provided in a minority language. A jurisdiction required to provide minority language materials is only required to publish in the language of the applicable language minority group materials distributed to or provided for the use of the electorate generally. Such materials include, for example, ballots, sample ballots, informational materials, and petitions.

(b) *Accuracy, completeness.* It is essential that material provided in the language of a language minority group be clear, complete and accurate. In examining whether a jurisdiction has achieved compliance with this requirement, the Attorney General will consider whether the jurisdiction has consulted with members of the applicable language minority group with respect to the translation of materials.

(c) *Ballots.* The Attorney General will consider whether a jurisdiction provides the English and minority language versions on the same document. Lack of such bilingual preparation of ballots may give rise to the possibility, or to the appearance, that the secrecy of the ballot will be lost if a separate minority language ballot or voting machine is used.

(d) *Voting machines.* Where voting machines that cannot mechanically accommodate a ballot in English and in the applicable minority language are used, the Attorney General will consider whether the jurisdiction provides sample ballots for use in the polling booths. Where such sample ballots are used the Attorney General will consider whether they contain a complete and accurate translation of the English ballots, and whether they contain or are accompanied by instructions in the minority language explaining the operation of the voting machine. The Attorney General will also consider

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whether the sample ballots are displayed so that they are clearly visible and at the same level as the machine ballot on the inside of the polling booth, whether the sample ballots are identical in layout to the machine ballots, and whether their size and typeface are the same as that appearing on the machine ballots. Where space limitations preclude affixing the translated sample ballots to the inside of polling booths, the Attorney General will consider whether language minority group voters are allowed to take the sample ballots into the voting booths.

§ 55.20 Oral assistance and publicity.

(a) *General.* Announcements, publicity, and assistance should be given in oral form to the extent needed to enable members of the applicable language minority group to participate effectively in the electoral process.

(b) *Assistance.* The Attorney General will consider whether a jurisdiction has given sufficient attention to the needs of language minority group members who cannot effectively read either English or the applicable minority language and to the needs of members of language minority groups whose languages are unwritten.

(c) *Helpers.* With respect to the conduct of elections, the jurisdiction will need to determine the number of helpers (i.e., persons to provide oral assistance in the minority language) that must be provided. In evaluating the provision of assistance, the Attorney General will consider such facts as the number of a precinct's registered voters who are members of the applicable language minority group, the number of such persons who are not proficient in English, and the ability of a voter to be assisted by a person of his or her own choice. The basic standard is one of effectiveness.

[Order No. 655-76, 41 FR 29998, July 20, 1976, as amended by Order No. 1752-93, 58 FR 35373, July 1, 1993]

§ 55.21 Record keeping.

The Attorney General's implementation of the Act's provisions concerning language minority groups would be facilitated if each covered jurisdiction would maintain such records and data

as will document its actions under those provisions, including, for example, records on such matters as alternatives considered prior to taking such actions, and the reasons for choosing the actions finally taken.

Subpart E—Preclearance

§ 55.22 Requirements of section 5 of the Act.

For many jurisdictions, changes in voting laws and practices will be necessary in order to comply with section 4(f)(4) or section 203(c). If a jurisdiction is subject to the preclearance requirements of section 5 (see § 55.8(b)), such changes must either be submitted to the Attorney General or be made the subject of a declaratory judgment action in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Procedures for the administration of section 5 are set forth in part 51 of this chapter.

Subpart F—Sanctions

§ 55.23 Enforcement by the Attorney General.

(a) The Attorney General is authorized to bring civil actions for appropriate relief against violations of the Act's provisions, including section 4 and section 203. See sections 12(d) and 204.

(b) Also, certain violations may be subject to criminal sanctions. See sections 12(a) and (c) and 205.

[Order No. 655-76, 41 FR 29998, July 20, 1976, as amended by Order 3291-2011, 76 FR 54112, Aug. 31, 2011]

Subpart G—Comment on This Part

§ 55.24 Procedure.

These guidelines may be modified from time to time on the basis of experience under the Act and comments received from interested parties. The Attorney General therefore invites public comments and suggestions on these guidelines. Any party who wishes to make such suggestions or comments may do so by sending them to: Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530.